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VISITING-CARDS.

THE visiting-card as we now know it is barely a century old. Like most other every-day articles of use and ornament, it is the result of a gradual process of evolution; and the form which the card now universally takes is by no means so attractive as those which it took in some of the earlier stages of its history. Of late years, indeed, there have been whispers of a new departure in cards. A revolt from the prevailing monotony in 'paste-boards' has more than once been threatened; and the great army of those who suffer from collector-mania have been tantalised with the prospect of new worlds to conquer, in the shape of visiting-cards ornamented with elaborately engraved devices. The idea of those who mooted the change was to give to the visiting-card a touch of individuality, so that each card, like a book-plate, should be a witness to its owner's individual taste and inclinations, and not a mere machine-made reproduction of a universal pattern. But nothing came of the proposal, and the present-day visiting-card still wears its uniform of plain black and white. Had the proposed change been carried out, however, it would simply have been a revival of a fashion that prevailed little more than a hundred years ago.

Visiting-cards were a development from the old style of message and invitation cards. Throughout the greater part of the last century it was customary to write messages and invitations on the backs of used playing-cards. The particular card used was often chosen at random; but occasionally it was picked out with an eye to the delicate suggestiveness of some one suit. This sometimes gave the recipient an opportunity for airing his or her wit. A Rev. Mr Lewis, who was minister of Margate from 1705 to 1746, once received an invitation to dinner, from the Duchess of Dorset, written on the back of a ten of hearts. The reverend

gentleman promptly replied by the following epigram:

Your compliments, lady, I pray you forbear,
Our old English service is much more sincere:
You sent me ten hearts—the tithe's only mine;
So give me one heart, and burn t' other nine.

One of the many stories that are told to account for the name of 'Curse of Scotland,' which is given to the nine of diamonds, attributes its origin to the alleged action of the Duke of Cumberland in writing his cruel order, refusing all quarter to the defeated Highlanders after Culloden, on the back of this particular card. But as the term was in use before the battle of Culloden was fought, the explanation can hardly be true. Much earlier the Irish name for the six of hearts—the 'Grace-card'—is said to have had its origin in a message written thereon. The tradition goes that a gentleman of Kilkenny, named Grace, was being strongly urged by a representative of Marshal Schonberg to declare for William of Orange and against James II. The marshal's emissary in his master's name made lavish promises of future rewards; but the Irish gentleman wrote the following answer on the back of the six of hearts: 'Tell your master I despise his offer, and that honour and conscience are dearer to a gentleman than all the wealth and titles a prince can bestow.'

An amusing example of the use of cards for messages can be seen in the fourth plate of Hogarth's 'Marriage à la Mode,' which dates from 1745. In a corner of the picture are several playing-cards lying on the floor, with inscriptions which show a considerable devotion to phonetic principles of spelling on the part of the fashionable world of that day. One bears the following: 'Count Baset begs to no how Lade Squander sleapt last nite.' Another has: 'Lady Squander's company is desir'd at Miss Hairbrane's Rout.'

Sometimes the backs of playing-cards which were used for invitations and similar purposes were elaborately engraved. The writer of a

once well-known book called the *Spiritual Quixote*, published in 1772, speaks of the use of playing-cards for the sending of messages as a new fashion; but it is clear from what has been already stated that they had been in common use for at least thirty or forty years. A curious survival of this custom was observed in the island of Madeira some years ago. A visitor who was staying in that delightful isle about 1865 recorded that the invitations given by the bishop for the Easter ceremonies in the cathedral of Funchal were written on the backs of playing-cards.

From the use of such cards simply for invitations and other messages it was an easy transition to their use for visiting purposes. At first the person who so used them simply wrote his name across the back of a card. Dr Doran, in one of his pleasant books of gossip, declares that it was in Paris, about the year 1770, that the custom was introduced of visiting *en blanc*, as it was called, that is by leaving a card. Old-fashioned folks, he says, who loved to visit in state and display their costumes, called this fashion fantastic, and strongly opposed it. But, of course, opposition of this kind was bound to fail. The ceremonial leaving of a card as equivalent to a visit may have begun in 1770, but the writing of the name on a card and leaving it when the person called upon was not at home was certainly practised somewhat earlier. In a French satire of 1741 on *Les Inconvénients du Jour de l'An*, the writer says:

Sur le dos d'une carte on fait la signature
Pour rendre sa visite au dos de la serrure.

The play upon the word *dos* is not very translatable, but the meaning of the couplet is plain—the person visited was not at home, but the card with the name written on the back paid the visit to the back of the lock, conveyed the visitor, as it were, to the other side of the locked door.

Writing the name on the back of a card was soon found to be too simple a matter, and it became the practice to write the name either on the backs of playing-cards, or on the face of cards adorned with engraved devices. Classical ruins and the like designs were highly fashionable. Cards so engraved appear to have been sold in packs, with assorted views; for two or more cards have been found bearing the same name written across them, but with quite different pictures as backgrounds. The practice of writing the name seems to have been soon superseded by engraving the name as well as the background. Much artistic ability and ingenuity were devoted to these cards. Sir Joshua Reynolds's card was engraved by Bartolozzi. The paste-board of Canova, the great sculptor, represented a block of marble, rough hewn from the quarry, and inscribed with the name in large Roman capitals, A. CANOVA. Miss Berry and her sister, who were well-known figures in London society from the days of Horace Walpole till near the middle of the present century, used a curiously adorned card. On it were shown two nymphs, classically draped, who pointed to a slab like a tombstone, grown over with weeds, on which was engraved the name 'Miss Berrys.' One of the

nymphs led a lamb by a ribbon, to typify, so it is said, Miss Agnes Berry!

Miss Busk some years ago described a beautifully engraved visiting-card, then in her possession, which had belonged to a Mr Richard Twiss, once well known as a writer of travels. This card, which was designed in 1793, had an outline border with à la Grecque corners, beyond which at the two top corners were two rings, from which depended a wreath of flowers and grapes intertwined with a strip of drapery, in the folds of which was engraved 'Mr Twiss.'

Visiting-cards seem to have been known by various names. Madame D'Arblay in her *Diary* uses the term 'name-card.' They were often spoken of as 'tickets.' A lady writer of the last century enters in her journal, under date November 16, 1799, when at Hanover: 'At six Madame de Busche called to take me to pay my visits. We only dropped tickets.' In Scott's *St Ronan's Well*, Captain Jekyl of the Guards introduces himself by presenting his 'ticket.' The same novel, by the way, the action of which is supposed to pass at the time of the Peninsular War, contains a somewhat belated example of the use of the playing-card for 'ticket' purposes. When Captain M'Turk, on hostile thoughts intent, asks Luckie Dods if Mr Tyrrell is at home, that undaunted heroine retorts, 'Wha may ye be that speers?' The captain, as the most polite reply to this question, says Scott, and as an indulgence at the same time of his own taciturn disposition, 'presented to Luckie Dods the fifth part of an ordinary playing-card, much grimed with snuff, which bore on its blank side his name and quality.' But Meg would have nothing to do with the 'deil's play-books,' as readers of the novel will remember, and Captain M'Turk had to state who he was and what he wanted.

A very large collection of eighteenth-century cards of various kinds—shop-bills, invitation, trade, funeral, and other cards and certificates—was formed by Miss Banks, the daughter of the famous naturalist, Sir Joseph Banks, who sailed round the world with Captain Cook. This collection is now in the Print Room of the British Museum; and the visitor who looks through this very interesting gathering of the flotsam and jetsam of the printing-press will find many valuable and curious specimens of the visiting-cards of long ago.

THE FASCINATION OF THE KING.

CHAPTER V. (continued).

THE week following we made an excursion up the Médang River; the next we visited the ruins of a prehistoric city, fifty miles or thereabouts to the southward. In this fashion the first month of our stay in the Médangs went by. A pleasanter time could scarcely be desired. Dutiless though I was, my days hardly contained an idle moment. The mornings I usually spent with the king, either riding about the country, inspecting troops, visiting forts or works in course of construction, consulting upon others about to be commenced, or in a hundred ways endeavouring to make myself useful to my host. During

the great heat of the day I read or painted in the Fountain Courtyard, conversed with the Princess Natalie and my sister; while the evenings were occupied, when there were no official receptions, either with music in the Princess's drawing-room or smoking in the cool upon the battlements above. The life interested me immensely. It was small wonder, therefore, that at the end of the first month I gladly accepted the king's pressing invitation to prolong my stay. Nor did Olivia seem any more anxious than I was to bid the Médangs farewell. It was easy to see that she had taken a decided liking to the blind Princess, for which I was glad, as also, I could tell, was the king.

By this time, as may be supposed, I had come to understand a good deal of the politics of the infant kingdom, and had seen more than a little of the methods by which our late fellow-traveller governed his subjects. That he had succeeded in his attempt to gain their esteem was self-evident; indeed, it would have been a difficult matter to have found a more popular ruler. At the same time, he was severe in his dealings with evil-doers, and any attempt to prevent or divert the due course of justice was certain to meet with condign punishment. By reason of his beneficent rule, trade was flourishing in every direction; those merchants who under the previous monarch had been driven, by extortion and robbery, into leaving the country were gradually returning to it, and taking up their former businesses; while others, having heard of the security in which their fellows dwelt, were fast entering the country and settling down in it.

Strange to relate, the king, once back in his own dominions, seemed to be quite himself again. He ate better, looked better, and found himself able to bear more fatigue without suffering so acutely afterwards than he had done for months past. What had brought about this hopeful state of things it was impossible to say, but that there *was* a decided improvement in his condition no one could deny.

At the end of the second month, and by the exercise of the most careful diplomacy, the French incident seemed to have been lulled to sleep. A greater feeling of security was noticeable along the borders than had been the case for years past. It looked as if the king's return had acted like oil upon the troubled waters, so quickly had the waves of discord settled down into the calm of peace. Still, month after month went by, and each one found us remaining in the kingdom. Once or twice I had hinted that it was almost time we brought our visit to a close, but on each occasion our host, assisted by the Princess Natalie, had pressed us to remain. At last, when we had been six months his guests, I felt compelled to put a definite period to our stay; and after a consultation with Olivia, I accordingly informed our host and hostess that in a week's time we should be obliged to leave them, and to proceed upon our journey.

The evening that I arrived at this decision was a hot one, and after dinner the Princess suggested that we should betake ourselves to

the roof of the palace. Accordingly we ascended thither, and settled ourselves down to enjoy the cool breezes that came up to us from the plain. The king, I noticed, was very silent, as was his sister, the bulk of the conversation falling upon Olivia and myself.

The night was truly magnificent, such an one as only those favoured latitudes can produce. From the roof of the palace we looked down upon the plain and the native city nestling at the foot of the giant crag; the latter was dotted with innumerable lights. Away beyond the mountain range to the eastward a faint glow betokened the rising of the moon. The only sound to be heard was the barking of a dog far away and the voice of a man singing in the courtyard of the barracks. After we had been sitting for some time talking of Venice and a dozen different things, Olivia rose and went forward to the parapet, where she stood with her hands resting on the coping, looking down into the abyss. Presently the king rose and followed her. They stood side by side for some moments, and then strolled together along the battlements. During the time they were absent I remained where I was, talking to the Princess. I cannot hope to make you understand how sweet and fragile she looked in her white dress. The moonlight sparkled upon her rings, and the perfume of her laces came distinctly to me, though I sat some feet away.

'And so it is your intention to leave us in a week, Lord Instow?' she said, when the footsteps of her brother and his companion had died away. 'We shall miss you very much.'

'We shall be equally sorry to go, I can assure you,' I answered truthfully. 'We have both enjoyed our stay in the Médangs so much that the place seems like a second home to us.'

'Marie will miss you terribly, I know,' she continued. 'He was only saying so this morning. He owes so much to his talks with you. My life too will be very lonely without your sister. You are proud of her, Lord Instow, and you have good cause to be. If only I could see her face. I know it must be very beautiful.'

'Yes, Olivia *is* beautiful,' I answered. 'And what is better still, she is a good woman. I am very proud of her, as you say.'

'She has been very kind to me, and I have no other friends.'

'I fear you have a very lonely life, Princess,' I said; 'but, if I may transpose your own words, you have a brother of whom any sister might be proud.'

'Dear Marie, I *am* proud of him,' she answered softly. 'But he is too busy to be able to give much of his time to me. He is so wrapt up in his country, he thinks of nothing else. He denies himself no trouble, he spares himself no pain; in fact, he seems to live for it alone.'

My heart was touched by the loneliness of the blind girl, shut up in this great barrack, without companion of any sort. For the first time, a sense of her real desolation came over me, and I was about to say something to her on

the subject when I was interrupted by the return of the other couple. Both seemed unusually quiet; and presently Olivia, with a little shiver, suggested that it was growing cold, and that it would perhaps be better if an adjournment were made to the rooms below. We accordingly rose, and I was about to follow the party down the steps when the king turned, and laying his hand upon my arm detained me.

'My lord,' he said, with unusual gravity, 'I should be glad if you could allow me a few minutes' conversation before we go downstairs. I have an important communication to make to you.'

'With pleasure,' I answered, but not without a slight feeling of alarm in my heart.

We accordingly walked back to the chairs, and took our former places.

'Lord Instow,' began the king, 'I am a plain man, and I like to say things in a plain way. Therefore, let me tell you at once, that to-night I have asked your sister, Lady Olivia, to be my wife and to share my throne with me. She has consented.'

For a moment, though for several reasons I had expected it, I sat dumbfounded by his news. I could scarcely believe it. It must have been nearly a minute before I recovered my wits sufficiently even to remember that I had offered him no reply.

'I'm afraid your lordship scarcely approves of my action?' said the king, who had evidently been studying my face.

'It's not that,' I blurted out, like a great schoolboy; 'but you have surprised me beyond all measure. I cannot say that I have never contemplated your loving her—for I presume you do love her?'

'God knows,' he answered, 'that I love her better than my own life. To call her mine I would sacrifice everything I hold dear.'

'You will not be asked to do that,' I said. 'But I must have time to consider it. At present I am all in a whirl, and can think of nothing. I must see Olivia too. You say she has accepted you?'

'She has been merciful enough to tell me that she loves me. Heaven alone knows what I have done to deserve so great a boon. My lord, I will simply say that I love your sister with a true and honest love. When I tell you that my father was that French Marquis de Meraut, who was murdered by the Commune, while my mother was the daughter of the Count Guilaeci, for many years Italian Ambassador at the Court of St James, you will see that my birth is equal to your own. Moreover, by my own endeavours, I am the sovereign of a country that has undoubtedly a great future before it. As my queen, I will love your sister, honour her, and protect her. Come what may, she shall always be my first care.'

'You must pardon me,' I said gravely, but not unkindly, 'if I ask you to allow further consideration of the matter to stand over until I have seen my sister. When I have had a talk with her I shall be in a position to tell you whether I can give my consent or not.'

'I am in your hands entirely,' he answered.

'By all means, since you wish it, let us defer consideration of it until such a time as you feel that you can give me the answer your heart dictates.'

'I will promise you an answer to-morrow morning without fail.'

'I thank your lordship. Now perhaps we had better go downstairs.'

In the Fountain Courtyard below we found the ladies waiting for us. Olivia greeted me with an anxious face, and I could see that she was hoping for an opportunity of speaking to me alone. This she found when we had all bidden each other good-night, and had separated to retire to our various rooms. Following me along the corridor, she caught me up as I passed through the sitting-room, which, since our arrival, had been set apart for our own private use.

'Instow,' she said, standing before me, 'I want to speak to you.'

I took her hand.

'I can guess what you are going to say,' I answered. 'The king has told me all.'

She looked up into my face, and I noticed that there was a light in her eyes that I had never seen there before—the light of love.

'You approve, do you not?' she asked, as if the fate of all the world hung upon my reply.

'Tell me first, dear, if you love him?' I said; 'I can answer you better then.'

A rosy blush suffused her face, and she hung her head a little. 'I love him as I shall never love another in my life,' she answered. 'He fascinated me from the very first, though I would not admit it even to myself. Now I would do anything, dare anything for love of him. Oh! Instow, I love him better than life itself.'

'But have you considered what it will mean to you?' I said. 'Have you thought what a change it will make in your life. You will probably not see England again for years; you will be cut off from home and friends—in a great measure even from myself. You will miss all the surroundings, and a great many of the luxuries to which you have been accustomed. Are you prepared to sacrifice so much?'

'I love him,' she answered simply; 'and nothing I can do will be a sacrifice. As to the other things you speak of, I shall find an equivalent in helping him in his life's work.'

'But you know his state of health. I do not wish to be unkind, but you must remember that seven months ago the Venetian doctors gave him but two years of life.'

'You are cruel to remind me of that,' she cried. 'But if it is so, the greater reason that I should make his life happy while it lasts.'

'In that case I will say no more. If you love him, and he loves you, and your happiness lies together, Heaven forbid that I should withhold my consent.'

She put her soft arms round my neck and kissed me. Then, before I could prevent her, she had slipped away again, and vanished from the room.

I passed from the sitting-room into my bedroom. But it was not to sleep. Hour after hour I tossed upon my couch, thought succeeding thought, and every one bringing me back to the original question:

'Had I done right in giving my consent?'

Alas, that was a question for which only time could find an answer.

PAPER FLOWER-MAKING.

WHO is there among us that does not like flowers, from the Queen on her throne, to the child revelling in the field among the poppies? but as our own poet says, we find to our chagrin and dismay, that 'pleasures are like poppies spread; we seize the flower, its bloom is shed,' and our lovely flowers, though 'things of beauty,' are not 'joys for ever;' and when, as often happens, our vases are empty, how very bare our rooms look! Myself an ardent lover of flowers, I felt this acutely, and would fill them with grasses or anything that came handy, using a little taste probably in my arrangements, and then it struck me the flowers could be copied. I was brought up to the artificial flower-making certainly, but now I was married, and had no appliances for making them in muslin or satin, what was the next best? Tissue paper. So I bought paper, wire and moss, and set to work to make my paper flowers. This was more than twenty years ago, and my paper flowers have found their way all over the kingdom, in the home of our bonnie Princess May, and in the humble cottage, as well as to foreign countries. Last winter, I started my classes, and most successful and enjoyable they were, both juvenile and adult; I hope I shall have the same pleasure this winter. The pupils find, like myself, that the making of these flowers is a most fascinating study; and another thing, it is causing both young and old to take a more lively interest in the beauties of Nature. They study the real flower, count the petals, note their shape, and the form of the leaves. Why? Because they are going to copy it in paper, and they continually find fresh charms to delight them. It must take away a good deal of the dryness from their botany classes; and I really think botanical teachers ought to feel very much obliged to me. At any rate, I do not intend to shelve Nature, for I will not make, or allow to be made, flowers that are not like the real ones; we make them as near a copy as possible 'on paper.' One lady of my acquaintance sat and cut up real flowers to 'see what was inside,' and said it was all through me; but she said she had no idea of their beauty till she had done it. I told her botanists had found that out before her. But the fact remains, we have 'eyes but we see not,' that is, we do not use them intelligently; and if my paper flowers make young and old, for both can make them, love the

real ones more, and understand them better, I feel I shall not have worked in vain.

Now, before proceeding any further, I would like to say a few kindly words to amateurs, for there is a good deal of these artists' work going about. It is very pleasing to see ladies taking such a keen interest in this delightful occupation. But to these ladies I would say take a few lessons, and then you will be able to finish your flowers properly, for it is not nice to see flowers with bare stems, and no leaves to speak of. Poor things, they look quite forlorn, like half-clad children; and another thing, there seems to be a very general idea among these ladies that if they can do some sort of a curly rose, a poppy, or a curly chrysanthemum, they have learnt all there is to learn. This, I need hardly say, is a very great mistake; there are numbers of charming flowers for you to copy, every one different from its neighbours, but all charming; so try and get out of the common rut, ladies, and seek 'fresh fields and pastures new.'

Now a word about materials: First, the paper. Don't buy cheap tissue. It is not satisfactory, and will not turn out good work. Good paper is delightful to work with. Fletcher & Sons' tissue I find does very good work. Try it, ladies, and be sure to notice when you are flower-making that there is a smooth side of the paper; keep that next you, except in the case of curly roses, when you turn it from you and curl it on that side, curling from you, so that when your rose is made the smooth side faces you after all. This is not a hard and fast rule, however; it varies, but it applies to a great many flowers. Then when you are cutting your paper be careful as to waste, allow, of course, a margin for cutting so as to insure your flower to be the correct size, or at least as near as possible. Second, the wire. Of this I use two kinds: a fine wire, No. 26 on the wire gauge, and a coarser kind for stems. This you can get at the metal warehouse at sixpence and eightpence per lb. Cut your fine wire yourself, but get the coarse wire cut at the warehouse, or you will break your scissors over it. They will cut any length you require if you ask them politely. The fine wire I use is about five or six inch lengths; the thick wire of course is cut longer; in that also you can follow your own inclination. In making up my flowers I use a great deal of moss. Third, this is called French moss, as it is prepared in France, and you can buy it at any fancy warehouse or florist's at fourpence and sixpence a bunch. Some of it is very pale, and does not show well in contrast. I seldom buy this kind, although I do not like it too high coloured either. You see, ladies, in this matter one has to use a little judgment as well as taste. Another point to which I would like to draw your attention is this: be careful in your choice of colour, as on that a great deal of your success will depend, and this includes not only the purchasing of your paper, but the mixing of your flowers after you have made them. Do not let one shade kill another. Choose shades that are good foils to each other. You will not regret paying attention to this rule. Some people err greatly in this respect; they have no

eye for colour, but this is most essential in our paper flower-making. For instance, pale straw and daffodil yellow go well together; pale lavender or mauve with violet, and so on; but, as I said before, your own taste must as a rule guide you in this matter.

Now the next item on our programme is the folding of the paper. Everything depends on this being done correctly. They are paying a great deal of attention to folding in the Kindergarten work in the schools, and it is a good introduction to proper flower-making. I had a good many board-school teachers, all of them very nice young ladies, and they said the paper-folding for the flowers was of the greatest service to them in their Kindergarten work. Now when folding your paper for cutting, keep the paper's own fold intact, and fold the paper parallel with it. Fold it until it is about two inches wide; it is then divided easily. For crocuses cut your sheet, which is twenty inches in length, into six parts; for tulips, seven or eight as you may desire; for Iceland poppies, into eight parts; for Canterbury bells, into six parts; for field poppies, into six, or five, if large ones are required. This brings us to the question of crêpe paper. Ladies can use it of course at their own discretion, but as I like my pupils to do their own crinkling, it is never on my table, though very pretty things can be done with it—flower-pot covers, lamp-shades, and so forth. Still I prefer the plain sheet of tissue to any other—it is easily handled. Now for our colours. For crocuses, white, mauve, orange, and violet; for tulips, white, scarlet, and yellow. You could, of course, get shaded paper for these, but it would come more expensive, so I just use these three shades. If you want them 'all a-growing and a-blowing,' put two or three in a small pot, cover the top with moss, but only put one shade in each pot, and they look very pretty. I have several pots filled in this way in my room. When cutting your tulips, fold your strip of paper three times, taking care your edges are even, or the petals will not be regular; then fold it three times again—this we call three into three. Begin cutting nearly an inch from the bottom, cutting upwards to a round point down the other side, finishing opposite to where you began. For the heart, you could fringe a little yellow or orange paper, which you will paper on a wire, taking the wire in your left hand and the paper in your right; damp the tip of your finger, twist straight forward until you secure the wire, then slant your paper, and run it down to the end; place your heart in the centre of first petal, and make a little pleat or fold; continue this, counting one each for petals and spaces. Don't forget to invert your petals as you go on, for the tulip petals curl inwards. This flower looks well with large dark leaves; for which I use dark moss-green tissue. For these leaves you fold your strip of paper twice, and get your four leaves at one cutting. Take a good hold when you paper on your leaf, or it will not stand up straight. A very favourite flower with me is the hydrangea, and it makes a brave show; for this flower you can use white, blush-pink, and several shades of mauve. We, however, affect the pale pink mostly. It is

very delicate and pretty. Cut your sheet of paper into eight parts, open, and refold five times; begin cutting half-way up your fold, cutting round the top in a scallop form; divide into sections of five, counting four petals a flower, and tie these round a tipped wire. From twenty-four to thirty-six blossoms are required to make a full flower, and as you tie your flower keep the petals perfectly smooth, and when spraying up, one must overlap the other a little. I use about ten large leaves with this, and it is most effective.

Pansies are also most successful, quite easy to make, and, like sweet peas, there is room for much taste in the combination of colours, so that, though it is only a paper flower, yet a good lesson may be learnt from it.

I often wonder if our little friend the wasp, the first paper-maker, ever thought of the very wonderful results of his labours. It is said the pen rules the world, but the pen would be nowhere without the paper to write on. It is indeed wonderful when one thinks of the numberless things—and now our flowers are included—that are made from a simple piece of paper.

ATTRAY'S WIFE.

CHAPTER III.

EUSTACE Hirst had plenty of food for reflection. What he had suspected, that the Reverend Mr Texter had some hold or other upon Mrs Mountjoy, was now almost verified, for he had more than hinted that if he chose he could lay hands on Will Attray; and, despite the apparent indifference of mother and daughter to the fate of the redoubtable smuggler, it was not a pleasant reflection for a lover that he might be called upon to bring his sweetheart's father to the gallows.

He began to think he was likely to make rather an ass of himself. He was in love with Eleanor, short as was his acquaintance with her; but, as Mr Texter had put it, how would his family, eminently respectable and particular Clapham folk, regard a union with her? He had, sailor-like, never thought of this when her sweet face and her refined manner bewitched him, and, to tell the truth, he was not disposed to weigh it very seriously now.

What was he to do? Throw her over and see her the wife of Parson Texter? Never! Take his chance about Texter's hint? Brave the threat—marry the girl—be brought face to face with an unpleasant duty, and be pointed out as the husband of a murdering smuggler's daughter? Better, but not a rosy prospect.

Call upon Mrs Mountjoy straight away and state his case clearly and boldly? Best of all. He at once proceeded to put his resolution into effect, and was walking briskly along the sea-wall, revolving in his mind how he could least offensively discharge himself of a delicate mission, when he espied Eleanor coming towards him. She looked fairer than ever on

this fresh, breezy morning, for her black locks were streaming in the wind, her cheeks were healthily flushed, and the swiftness of her movement showed her perfect figure off to the fullest advantage.

'Good morning! I am glad to have met you. I was on my way to call on your mother,' said Eustace.

'And I was coming to—to make you my confidant,' said the girl. 'Where can we talk quietly?'

'Where better than under this wall—here, on this groin—the same near which you'—

'I know—I know! Don't recall it. I was hardly myself, and I did not even thank you,' said Eleanor.

They seated themselves side by side on the weather-beaten wood-work, for, though October was half passed, the season was sweet and mild, and for the first time since his arrival at Broadmarsh the young officer had seen the peculiar beauty of the sun-lit marsh country.

'Mr Hirst,' said the girl, 'after you left yesterday morning Mr Texter offered marriage to me. I rejected him. He received my decision strangely. He simply said: "I am sorry, Miss Eleanor. Sorry for myself, and more sorry for you." What did he mean?'

'I will tell you what I think he meant,' replied Eustace. 'Mind—only what I think he meant. I believe, from what he has hinted to me that he is in possession of information which would lead to the arrest of your father.'

'Indeed!' said the girl indifferently; but the lieutenant fancied there was a slight accent of anxiety in her speech. 'And then?'

'And he therefore imagines that to spare your father you would be willing to make any sacrifice.'

'Do you believe that he has any such information?'

'I am sorry to say that I do.'

'What makes you think so?'

'I can hardly tell you, Miss Mountjoy; but he gives me the idea of being a man who, to gain his own ends, would leave no stone unturned to find the means. It is quite possible that he, a smuggling parson, may possess special facilities for obtaining such news. Your father may be on this coast for aught that you or I know. He would be pretty safe here. None of the fraternity would betray him.'

Eleanor was perceptibly moved by what the young man had said, which was strange, considering what indifference both she and her mother had expressed concerning the fate of Attray.

'Will you come and see my mother and tell her what you have told me?' said the girl, after a long silence.

'Certainly—but—'

'But what?'

There was a strong wrestling going on within the young man between duty and love.

'I must be candid, Miss Mountjoy,' he replied. 'I am a naval officer, and my duty must stand first in the guidance of my conduct. I must ask you to promise me that I shall not be expected to neglect my duty under any circumstances. I mean'—

'I know what you mean, Mr Hirst,' said the girl, somewhat in the proud, imperious tone which she had employed on the occasion of their first meeting. 'You mean that if knowledge of the whereabouts of my father should come to you, no considerations of—of respect for me'—

'Of affection, rather,' put in Eustace.

'Of affection, then, for me shall prevent you from performing your duty. No sir, I may be the daughter of William Attray, but I would never, even on his account, be an obstacle of that sort. Come!'

They rose and walked rapidly to Green Place.

Mrs Mountjoy was walking up and down the pebble garden path behind the house, stately and serene as an imprisoned sovereign. She bowed gracefully to Eustace Hirst, took her daughter's arm, and led the way into the house.

'You have news, I see,' she said, in the quiet, low-pitched voice which was not her least attraction. 'Let me hear it. Any news is welcome here.'

'I have no special news, Madam,' said the young man.

'But you have been telling my daughter something which concerns us. What was it?' asked Mrs Mountjoy.

So Eustace briefly recounted his opinion about the parson's strange reception of his rejection by Eleanor.

'He is a windbag, that man,' said Mrs Mountjoy, smiling. 'He knows nothing. He is only pretending to. Ever since we have been here he has been paying his attentions to my girl. She does not like him, and I don't care for him, although I see no absolute wrong in him. I would not oppose his marrying her, but as Eleanor's happiness is the only object I have to live for, I would not urge her to do what is distasteful to her. Let us be plain with each other—you as a sailor, I as a sailor, for I have passed almost as much of my time afloat as ashore. You have only known Eleanor a few days, but you are attached to her?'

'Yes—yes, I am, but I have never told her so, Madam,' replied the young man.

'Have you thought the thing well over? Have you considered what it means to marry the daughter of William Attray? Have you considered that if information concerning William Attray was placed in your hands, it would be your duty to act upon it, and to bring the father of your bride to the gallows?'

'I have, and it places me in a terrible position,' replied the young man.

'It need not be,' said Mrs Mountjoy. 'Consider well what you are doing.'

'Then may I dare to hope that if I should ask Miss Mountjoy to be my wife, she would accept me?'

'Consider your position first. Then come and ask her. Remember, three days is a short

courtship. You really cannot know Eleanor yet.'

'O yes, yes!' exclaimed the young officer rapturously. 'I need not consider. I will risk all! I will brave all!'

'You are young and inexperienced,' said Mrs Mountjoy, smiling. 'She is my first consideration, and I would never consent to her union with you if I thought there was the smallest chance of her being as a millstone round your neck. Remember, she is William Attray's daughter, and that you will never disestablish that black fact. Remember also, that although William Attray's daughter should be your wife, it will be your duty to allow justice to take its course with William Attray. Not that they will catch him yet. His head has been in a noose before now. But if, upon consideration, you feel that you can take my Eleanor for your wife and will make her happy, I am content. I have nothing more to live for, and I shall welcome the end of an unhappy life.'

The love-lorn lieutenant was profuse in his thanks and promises, and swore that nothing should tempt him from the path of duty either to his love or to his profession, and for the second time in three days walked forth the happiest man in the Marsh.

As was often his wont, Eustace Hirst turned in to the 'Tartar Frigate,' the centre of Broad-marsh life and light, that evening. Here preventive and runner met on equal terms, and often quaffed from the same bowl—a matter of a few hours only sometimes separating the act of drinking to each other's good luck from the act of breaking each other's heads.

The parson was also a patron of the 'Tartar Frigate'; indeed, a score opposite his initials might be seen on the slate in the bar near to that standing against the name of a sea-savage who could neither read nor write. But the parson was not proud, and was consequently a man of many friends. Indeed, the lieutenant did not dislike the man, although he despised and distrusted him.

So it happened that when the lieutenant walked in at about dusk, he found the parson there.

The latter stepped forward with one hand outstretched, and the other supporting a goodly rummer of hot drink.

'Congratulate you, Hirst; I do sincerely. What'll you have?' said he.

'Congratulate me on what?'

'You know, you sly rogue. Gone and stolen a march upon the poor sky pilot, and won the beauty of the Marsh. What'll you have?'

'Well,' replied Eustace, 'you're the last man in the world I should have expected to congratulate me. Mine's brandy hot with. How about what you said to me about—you know who? Look here: before we touch glasses, tell me straight—can you lay hands on him?'

'No, I can't.'

'Then why did you say you could—or rather, hint that you could?'

'Never did any such thing. I only supposed, and you shut me up by saying that you preferred to deal with facts.'

'That's all very well, but I'm an old sailor,

and you know, John Texter, as well as you're standing there, that you wanted to choke me off from courting Miss Mountjoy.'

'So I did. I admit it. What then?' replied the parson, with candour written on his open face. 'We were both angling for the same fish. You've landed her. I haven't. All's fair in love and war and smuggling.'

'Then you admit you were not in earnest?'

'Not I. I was very much in earnest.'

'I mean, you admit that what you said about my being bound to arrest Attray if I was shown how to do it was a stratagem.'

'If you like to call it so, yes. But look here. I've thrown up the sponge, and so let's drink to Miss Eleanor's very good health, and happiness, and prosperity!'

'With all my heart!' replied Eustace, and in less than five seconds the stems of two empty glasses rang on the bar counter.

'And you've made up your mind to marry the daughter of Bill Attray, and to run the risk of having to help to string him up, and to be pointed out as the husband of a murderer's daughter, have you?' said the parson, half in soliloquy. 'Well, you're a plucky one, that's all I can say! Let's hope for your sake that Bill won't be run to earth.'

After another glass and a little general talk, the lieutenant turned homewards. He was young, and was very green in the ways of the world outside his calling. He was, like all sailors, over-apt to think of men as he found them, and yet he did not leave the inn with an entirely easy mind.

Texter's acceptance of his defeat was too philosophical to be quite genuine. He was a little too careless and resigned about it to be acting naturally; for, although Eustace Hirst had no experience as a fighter in the lists of love, it did not seem possible to him that any man professing love for a girl with such warmth as he knew Texter had expressed his feeling for Eleanor, could quietly allow a rival to snatch the prize from him with such a show of acquiescence.

No. Texter had yet a card up his sleeve, and would bide his time to plump it down at the right moment, and despite his denial of the fact, Eustace believed that this card was the arrest of Bill Attray.

Another cause of anxiety was the position his own family would take up. He was the younger son of a well-to-do, but by no means wealthy London merchant, who belonged to that rigid circle of purists who made Clapham Common their centre, and who were unsparing in their condemnation of the slightest deviation from the paths of strict rectitude in general, and of improper marriages in particular.

He knew very well that to marry Eleanor Attray would be to bring on his head vials of wrath from the top of the family to the bottom, from one end of Clapham Common to the other.

Yet he believed Eleanor would make quite as true and good a wife as many who had issued from the grim portals of Clapham Old Church, and for the life of him he couldn't see why the sins of the fathers should always be visited on the children. Above all, he was

head over heels in love with her, and Clapham was a far cry from Broadmarsh.

So, sturdily-minded young Briton as he was, he resolved to trust to luck, and to pray for the good fortune which proverbially attends the brave.

BETTER HOMES FOR WORKING PEOPLE.

As we have always the poor with us, the problem of better homes for working people is a burning question to-day, both in town and country; for in the city as in the village, there are plague spots, which it must be the aim of every lover of his species to remove or ameliorate. Some people sink into squalid and filthy surroundings through laziness, drink, evil-living, or improvidence; some have been more sinned against than sinning in that they had a slender chance to successfully breast the strong currents of misfortune, of heredity, and evil surroundings. Much has already been done, a good deal is in process of being done, and yet there remains much to do. 'Whenever a group of people,' says Miss Graffenried of the U.S. Department of Labour, 'live in want and squalor, their misery lowers the whole social level.' The result of impaired vitality is often relaxed moral and religious standards, with ignorance and crime as a result. There is some truth in the remark that the two civilising agencies of the highest value for labouring people, next to industrial training and baths for American working men, are bay windows and front door bells. These are not everything, for a pig will not change its habits with a change of sty; but there is so much in air-space, plenty of elbow-room, and absence of over-crowding in rearing a healthy and contented people, that the thing is worth struggling for and preaching continually from the house-tops. An acute writer and observer, Mr W. Hale White, ascribes 'the peculiar sourness of modern democracy to deficiency of oxygen and sunlight.' It was the realisation of the bitterness of the lot of many in their sordid surroundings of city life which made Lord Shaftesbury a philanthropist; and his whole life was a struggle with the forces of oppression and evil. George Peabody, the American millionaire, once poor himself, 'felt in his pocket' to the extent of half a million of money, which, as laid out in dwellings for the industrial poor of London, has doubled the capital, and has been doing good ever since it was so hardened into better homes for working people. Mr Ruskin has often contrasted the spirit of the modern builder with that of the builders of our cathedrals: 'the modern aggregate of bad building, and ill-living, held in check by constables, which we call a town, of which the widest streets are devoted, by consent, to the encouragement of vice, and the narrow ones to concealment of misery.' There is much exaggeration and some truth in this language; but we must remember that in 1864 Mr Ruskin encouraged Miss Victoria Hill, in her labours amongst the London rookeries, to the extent of £3000, to purchase two neglected courts, very much misnamed 'Paradise' and 'Fresh-water.' Mr

Ruskin, in *Fors Clavigera* and elsewhere, has given his opinion of London middle-class buildings, as reared of rotten brick, with various iron devices to hold them together. He politely calls them 'packing-cases, in which they (the dwellers) are temporarily stored, for bad use.' Also, he likens them to vans full of monkeys, 'that have lost their legs.'

It may be of interest to glance at what beneficent efforts have accomplished in our time, in London and elsewhere, to face the problem of better dwellings for working people. Sir B. W. Richardson has sketched his model city of 'Hygeia,' Dr Parker has talked of rebuilding London, while the Rev. Canon Barnett, in a sensible lecture, has sketched an ideal city, with a quarter of a million of inhabitants, in which, 'Gone are the close alleys in which men and children die before their time. Gone are the houses in which families swarm and foster a pestilence. Gone are the smells, the filth, and the danger.' Let us pass on, however, to those who have actually faced existing conditions, and put their shoulder to the wheel.

In this connection, a peep at London early in the century reveals the need of changed conditions. Mr Weyland of the London City Mission, in a communication to the present writer, says: 'I remember Lord Shaftesbury telling me about his first visit to the slums of Westminster. "I was an M.P. at that time," he said, "and arranged for that energetic missionary, Andrew Walker, to meet me at the entrance of the House of Commons, and to introduce me to his district, which was only about three minutes' walk distant. We spent two hours in Old Pye Street and its neighbouring courts and alleys. The dilapidated and insanitary dwellings were inhabited by wretched, half-clothed people, while swarms of ragged, shoeless children gave the place a heathen appearance. It was evidently a centre of thievery, as active or discharged criminals were found in every house." His lordship, saddened by what he had seen, at once moved in the direction of helping to found a Ragged School and a Reformatory House for juvenile thieves.

An article in *Chambers's Journal* for August 21, 1847, by William Chambers, describes these slums. It is entitled, 'A Visit to Westminster—but not to the Abbey.' This same Andrew Walker, 'originally a gardener from Earlston, Berwickshire, was his guide. We have Walker's unpublished MS. diary before us, in which he mentions that twenty-two rooms in New Square were occupied by fifty girls, to whom the rooms were let at four shillings a week for immoral purposes. Would it be believed that some of this slum property so tenanted belonged to the Dean and Chapter of the Abbey? Old Pye Street district, with Duck Lane and surroundings, gave Charles Dickens material for more than one article for *Household Words*. Andrew Walker has some information in his diary about the visit paid by Dickens to this part of London. The Scottish missionary had been asked to visit a sick person at a lodging-house at 20 Ann street. He was shown up-stairs, and had no sooner entered the room than he requested the landlady to open the window, as

there was a sickening smell, fit to breed a pestilence. Mr Walker went round to the front of Westminster Abbey until the room was aired. There he met Charles Dickens, who expressed himself glad to see him, as he had come to have a look at some of the lodging-houses for travellers. He returned with Dickens to the room he had left, and found it ventilated. Straw beds lay upon the floor close together, with about eighteen inches of passage along the centre. About the middle of the room lay the sick woman. Dickens asked her how many persons had slept in the room during the night. She replied, forty men and women, besides a number of children. Other lodging-houses were visited, not excepting the notorious Queen of Spain's, Dickens remarking, when it was over, that this neighbourhood might well be called 'The Devil's Barracks.' At 63 Orchard Street was one house with beds for sixty, at threepence per night; other houses had forty beds; where, when cooking of steaks and chops, fish, or sausages was going on at one time, the odour may be better imagined than described. This visit, Andrew Walker says, led up to the Model Lodging-house Bill for London, one of the most beneficent pieces of legislation, according to Dickens, which has ever been put on the Statute-book. Lord Shaftesbury had much to do with the passing of the Bill for the Inspection and Registration of Lodging-houses in 1851, and his powerful advocacy in the *Quarterly Review* enlightened public opinion on the subject. The improvement after the passing of the bill was gratefully acknowledged in an article in *Chambers's Journal* for 1853.

Old Pye Street and Duck Lane, which Andrew Walker found largely tenanted by thieves and prostitutes, have now been altered by much-needed city improvements. Here some of the Peabody dwellings have been erected. Walker had six hundred and fifty rooms in his district, with an average of four persons in each room; there were eight public-houses, two of them the headquarters of thieves. Another was known as the Beggar's Opera, where members of the 'profession' gathered in the evening, drinking and reciting their street songs. In one thieves' kitchen Walker saw, in the centre of the room, suspended from the ceiling, what was termed 'the doll,' being a wire frame, about the size of the human body, with a lady's dress placed over it. In the centre of the frame hung a bell. In the pocket of the dress was placed a purse containing sixpence. Around the doll Walker saw about twenty boys and girls, from ten to fifteen, receiving instruction how to slip their hands into the pocket and take the purse without causing the bell to tinkle. There was a mock trial afterwards in cases of failure.

This is but a sample of what had to be ameliorated in one district of London. There is no doubt that it was Lord Shaftesbury's influence and example which led Thomas Holloway to found the Holloway Sanatorium near Virginia Water, and the Ladies' College at Egham, at a cost of £750,000. Likewise the same influence led George Peabody to devote half a million of his surplus wealth, as we have said, for the good of

the industrial classes of the metropolis. Sir Curtis Lampson, one of the Peabody trustees, estimated that if the money in hand was honestly dealt with for two hundred years, it should in that time have accumulated sufficiently to provide for three-fourths of the industrious poor of London. A beginning was made with the Peabody buildings at Islington, which were opened in 1865 at a cost of £31,690, comprising one hundred and fifty-five tenements, with accommodation for six hundred and fifty persons. Great care has been exercised in drainage and ventilation, dust and refuse are removed by means of shafts, and the passages are kept clean and lighted with gas. There are also free baths and laundries, with every convenience. For one room the weekly charge is about two shillings or two and sixpence; two rooms four shillings; three rooms five shillings; four rooms seven to seven and sixpence. The conditions laid down by Peabody, which have secured good character in the occupants, are that they be of 'an uncertain condition of life, such as brings the individual within the description of the poor of London, combined with moral character and good conduct as a member of society.' By 1889 there were eighteen groups of buildings erected in Shadwell, Chelsea, Islington, Spitalfields, Bermondsey, Westminster, Old Pye Street (where as we have seen there was clamant need), Blackfriars Road, Stamford Street, Southwark Street, Pimlico, Whitechapel, &c. The report of the Peabody Donation Fund up till 1895 showed that the total fund with accrued rent and interest had risen from £500,000 to £1,169,338, and that 11,367 rooms had been provided, besides bath-rooms, lavatories, laundries; and the number of persons in residence on December 31st was 19,914. Of these, labourers constituted the largest section, numbering 684, porters 542; then came charwomen 355, carmen 301, needlewomen 278, and warehouse labourers 186. Thus the vow which George Peabody registered early in his career to do something for the poor of London, if he prospered in business, is being fulfilled.*

There have been other worthy workers in the same field. The method of Miss Octavia Hill, and those who were associated with her, was to purchase property in the slums, call regularly for the rents, gradually work their way into the respect and affections of the tenants, and so insensibly elevate their standard of living. Old buildings were pulled down, and houses like St Christopher's Buildings rose instead. In a few years Miss Hill had £74,000 worth of property under her superintendence. Sir Sidney H. Waterlow, who in 1889 handed over to the London County Council his estate of twenty-nine acres, on the south slope of Highgate Hill, has also been a leading spirit in the 'Improvement Industrial Dwellings Company,' which has erected thousands of houses at Chelsea, Pimlico, and elsewhere. This Company has always paid at least five per cent. to the promoters. The essential principle in the Waterlow dwellings is that each tenement shall be complete in itself, and more attempt is here made than in the

* For further information as to this movement, see *Four Great Philanthropists: Lord Shaftesbury, George Peabody, John Howard, and Oberlin.* (W. & R. Chambers, Limited.)

Peabody buildings to combine beauty with utility. Some are let at two and sixpence a room per week. The stairways are all external, and each set of rooms opens separately from the landings. Sir Edward Guinness in 1889 set aside £250,000 for dwellings for the poor, of which £200,000 were to be expended in London, and £50,000 in Dublin. By the agency of this Trust, 1877 separate dwellings, containing 3738 rooms, besides laundries, club-rooms, coster's sheds, &c., have been provided.

The report of the Mansion House Council on the dwellings of the poor in London for 1895 shows that in West Ham out of 2223 insanitary conditions existing in 596 houses in March 1894 over 1000 still remained unremedied in the middle of 1895. Lord Rowton, chairman of the Guinness Trust, has, on his own account, interested himself in providing lodging-houses for the people. One near Vauxhall Station has 484 beds; another at King's Cross 676 beds; and one building in process of erection at Newington Butts will contain 800.

'Fagin's Kitchen,' so graphically described by Dickens in *Oliver Twist*, with its filthy and insanitary conditions, has come under the ban of the London County Council, and is now closed. It was a registered lodging-house at Viaduct Chambers, Great Saffron Hill, Holborn. The premises consist of the main building and five cottages. The place had fifty-three beds in the main building. Branches of the Mansion House Council have also been doing good work in various parts of London, and have drawn attention to insanitary conditions, most of which have been remedied. The number of sanitary inspectors has increased in recent years, from 94 in 1885 to 127 at the present time; while the London County Council has also erected artisan dwellings at Yardley Street, Poplar, East Greenwich, Deptford, Hackney Road, and Shoreditch.

By bringing into force the Housing of the Working Classes Act of 1890, any town council can force the erection of new houses in place of insanitary ones. The Registrar-general's standard of overcrowding exists wherever more than four people are found sleeping in one room. The Dudley Christian Society Union found that 10,485 persons were so living amongst them, and that only four other towns were worse; Gateshead with forty per cent. of the inhabitants so living, Newcastle with thirty-five, Sunderland thirty-two, and Plymouth twenty-six. In Leeds it has been proposed to deal with an insanitary area of 16 acres, in which are 634 dwelling-houses, in eleven of which the people live underground, and fifteen public-houses. In connection with Dudley, Mr Bean has shown reason why one-half of the worst tenements should be razed, owing to hopelessly insanitary conditions. An article in the *Review of Reviews*, exposing the condition of Dudley, has so far forced the hand of the local authorities.

The working man's building societies, which exist over the length and breadth of the land, have been of immense service in helping him to help himself. A good example exists in the Edinburgh Co-operative Building Company, which began operations in the Water of Leith district of Edinburgh, at Canonmills, in 1861.

It has always paid a good dividend, averaging twelve per cent., and has risen as high as twenty-five per cent. in an extra good year. By its aid, hundreds of dwellings have been erected in the town and suburbs. The late Dr Begg wrote an excellent account of its inception in *Happy Homes for Working Men, and how to get them* (1866). While Lord Provost of Edinburgh (1865-69), William Chambers promoted an act for the improvement of the city, which resulted in a great diminution of the death-rate. The Glasgow Workmen's Dwellings Company has started well, and pays four per cent.

'The Working Man's Dwellings Bill,' drafted to enable local authorities, where they think it advisable, to advance money to working men, to enable them to become the owners of the houses in which they live, passed its second reading in the House of Lords on 29th June. Not more than £150 was to be advanced to any individual, under its provisions, and the building of the house was to be superintended and sanctioned by the local authority. This is an experiment; but we believe strongly in the principle of self-help, and were legal formalities in connection with bonds and loans cheaper and easier, private loans would be more popular, and the working man would be independent even of the building society, which extracts a considerable rate of interest over a long period.

In an article, 'Need of Better Homes for Wage Earners,' in the *Forum* for May, Miss Graffenried says that some of the worst barracks in New York are owned by ignorant, irresponsible landlords, often by foreigners. In New England the French Canadians invest largely in property of this kind, and in New York the Italians are buying it up largely. The case is mentioned of a forewoman in a flower factory, who said that she meant to put her savings into a half interest in a tenement of this sort, paying twenty-six per cent. The big lodging houses in New York yield from fifty to eighty per cent., and some of the worst hovels in Philadelphia forty per cent. Buffalo, Cincinnati, Pittsburgh, and Allegheny (where typhoid fever prevails) have all their slum problems also.

The first object of the philanthropist is to drag these extreme cases into the light of publicity. Once public attention and feeling are aroused, the local authority may be coerced into action. For it is still true that one-half of the world does not know how the other half lives.

THE LITTLE GENERAL.

By RICCARDO STEPHENS.

It being a Saturday afternoon, Timothy McCarthy, Senior, was very drunk.

He had beaten Kathleen, his wife, much earlier than usual, and young Tim, coming in soon after, got a stray and careless clout on the side of the head, while poking about for a match to light his pipe.

A year ago Young Tim might have stood this, but he was married now, a six months' married man with a one-roomed house of his own, and having only looked in to pass the

time of day, and having also had a glass or two, he felt it to be a breach of hospitality.

'Ye onmannerly ould sinner!' I heard him shout through the open window, 'here's for yez!' and the clout was returned generously.

The free fight that came after is still remembered in Rutherford's Close, off the High Street of Edinburgh. They fought the length of the fairly long room, from the fireplace to the door, and back again from the door to the fireplace, as youth or experience proved the stronger, until Kathleen had screamed herself hoarse, and even the hardened children playing in the dirty court below looked up astonished from their dust and mussel-shells.

They fought back again to the door, tugging and straining, at too close quarters to do all the damage they wished, while I watched them from my window, one flat higher on the opposite side of the court.

Then a cunning back-fall sent Young Tim against the door, which flew open, and staggering out of my sight together, they rolled down the dark stair, fighting into the High Street through a crowd of interested neighbours, who were far too sportsmanlike to interfere.

I, having some weeks of hard reading behind me, and an examination very near, was not so liberal-minded as the neighbours, and, going through the wynd presently, expressed my opinions freely to them concerning Messrs McCarthy.

'Another such row,' I said, 'and I'll get old McCarthy to the police station. Some of you can tell him so when he's sober.'

They told him apparently before that desirable state was reached, and standing under my window a little later, flushed with victory, he expressed his opinion of me and my manners—which he offered to improve in one lesson if I'd give him the chance.

This I declined to do until he should be saner, whereupon he classified me as a cowardly water-drinking viper, saying there were none such in ould Ireland, thanks be to St Patrick, and went away to drink again, with the result that a little before midnight Kathleen McCarthy was yelling murder for all she was worth.

I was awake and dressed, and reading, and I had not forgotten Old Tim's contemptuous sarcasms. It sounded as though Kathleen was suffering for my shyness of encounter, and that stung me badly. Besides, twice, to my knowledge, killing had been done within a hundred yards of that place without any attempt at interference, and I had no mind to risk being a party to a third such affair. The screams continuing, I ran out and knocked up a neighbour.

'Fetch the police for your life!' I said, 'and bring them to Tim McCarthy's!' and then I bolted down my stair and stumbled up Tim's, until I had groped my way to his door.

There I paused and listened, lurking on the threshold with no thirst for unnecessary risks. Kathleen was now scolding and crying at the same time, so the danger was not pressing. I did not know how many might be in the room, but I calculated that they were likely all to set upon me together, if I presented myself as

an unbidden guest, and here I thought I would wait for the police. I listened lest any sudden outbreak should force me to go in alone, but the first fresh sound came from below. A quick step sounded in the wynd, and mounted the stair. It was too quick and light for one of the police, but came up with the decided sound of a foot that knew the place, and had no need to soften its tread. I moved to meet it, and was at once challenged in a clear firm voice, as a shadowy figure rose.

'Ah! Your neighbour met me,' the voice broke in directly I began to explain. 'You frightened him, and he has insisted on going for the police, though I told him I didn't think they'd be needed. Let's go in!'

'They're quieter now,' I whispered; 'shan't we wait?'

'Why?' said the voice brusquely, and, without waiting for the answer which I was cudgelling my brains to shape as concisely as the question, the figure threw the door open and stepped in confidently with a 'Pax vobiscum.'

I, ashamed, followed close upon his heels, and was immediately put on my guard, for Old Tim, whose whisky-sodden intelligence, I believe, the salutation had not yet reached, scented treachery, and came for me as straight and as swiftly as his condition would allow.

'Pax vobiscum!' The slight straight figure stepped swiftly between us, one hand upraised, and Tim came no farther.

'Stand you back, Tim McCarthy!' said the little man severely, 'or if you can't stand, then lie, but don't come a step this way, or 'twill be a bad night for you!'

But there was no thought of rebellion. When two tall and sturdy members of the City Police tramped stolidly up a few minutes later, there was nothing for them to do. Tim lay asleep and snoring in the corner; Kathleen moaned and winced a little under the deft fingers of the priest, who was dressing a cut over one well-blackened eye, while I, a medical—though it is true only in my second year—was humbly holding the candle. The two men grinned and saluted, getting a quick little nod in return, as my companion, safety-pin in mouth, made a neat reverse of the bandage round Kathleen's head.

'We're no needit,' said one of them, with conviction, and I saw a little dry smile develop, as well as it might, around the safety-pin.

The two men saluted again and went away, and we finished patching up Kathleen. After that, the little man, having shaken his head sternly over the unconscious Tim in the corner, gave a parting word to his wife.

'Send your man to me by nine to-morrow morning, Kathleen McCarthy, and see that he comes sober. Come round yourself after vespers, and I'll look at your head. Now, sir, if you and I are going down the stair together, we might intruluce ourselves.'

In that way began my acquaintance with Father Munro.

I walked to his door with him that night, and did not decline so unhesitatingly as I ought to have done, when he invited me to come in.

'It's too late, sir,' I said; 'some other time, if I may.'

'Pooh! Nonsense!' said the old man in his sharp, military manner. 'Young fellows like you and old fellows like me are no lie-abeds. Come away in, man!' and I went with no further ado.

He took me into a fair-sized square room, sparsely furnished, but having its walls hidden by books from floor to ceiling. On the table stood a plate of cold porridge and a quaint, tall glass of milk, set out daintily with a fine white napkin and an old silver spoon; and this I mention, since later I found that a mixture of simplicity with touches of daintiness were characteristic of Father Munro. These things he looked at whimsically for an instant, first at them, then at me, and making an excuse, left the room. Presently he came back triumphant, a bottle of wine in one hand, and a plate of cheese in the other, and setting them down and paying no heed to my remonstrances, went off again to fetch in more.

'I'm hungry, and can't eat alone,' was all he said, when things were arranged to his satisfaction; after which, pouring out wine for me, he said a short Latin grace, and attacked his porridge with vigour and decision, beaming upon me when I showed a good appetite, but taking none of his good things for himself.

After supper, however, he allowed himself a pipe; while I, at his invitation, lit a cigarette, and he started to chat. Of the actual talk little or nothing is worth repeating. I recall it only because, while I watched and listened, he showed so clearly what manner of man he was.

His demeanour was courtesy itself, yet peremptory, matching well with the fine, closely-cropped head, the benignant face, and strong, firm jaw. A distinguished, almost foreign politeness ornamented his soldierly speech, just as a damascening of gold will ornament a good steel blade. I was sure he had lived abroad; I should not have been surprised to hear that he had seen military service, and in my own mind I then and there dubbed him 'The Little General.' One thing marked him off distinctly from the military types I am accustomed to; he seemed to have no practical respect for the law, as of general application, and that showed itself in the one speech which I think worth repeating.

Speaking of the way in which he had marched in upon Ould Tim, I suggested that he ran more risk than was necessary. At this Father Munro cocked a clear gray eye at me, and asked what I would have had him do.

'The law,' I said, 'and the police, are for such people, are they not, and for such times? Did you need to run the risk of meeting a mad drunkard, and possibly others behind him, when the police were almost at the door?'

But Father Munro was indignant.

'The law, sir! the law! Risk! and the police! The law is meant to protect the weak and the defenceless, is it not? I was there, and you, sir'—with a polite little bow. 'They are my parishioners, and accept me as their judge, yes, and their executioner on occasion. Boastfulness is unbecoming in an old man; but at one time, sir, some said I could use rapier

and claymore a bit, and my hand can guard my head yet when I carry my pastoral staff.'

He nodded, twinkling quaintly toward a corner of the room, and looking there I saw a stout blackthorn.

'Do you think I go about among my poor children with the law at my back?' he asked, seeming almost hurt at the notion.

'I noticed that the law evidently thought you could take care of yourself,' I said, remembering the two policemen, and this seemed to please Father Munro. He laughed, and told me that the police were his very good friends, some of them his parishioners too, and then turned the conversation, chatting to me about books and my own work until I got up hurriedly, with an apology for having been led to forget the time.

'I must be in your parish too, sir,' I told him, 'and if a heretic is allowed to come in now and then when you're not too busy, or to hope for a pastoral visitation, I wish you would add my name to your list.'

The little man, rising alertly to see me out, looked keenly into my eyes for a second, and then held out his hand.

'These doors are open to you, my son, whenever you choose, and if an old man's society won't trouble you, you shall see me up your stair before long;' and he bade me good-night.

After that I began to see Father Munro often, and to hear of him still oftener. Every one who knew him had a good word for him, and after having been seen once or twice in his company, I met the Irish among my neighbours on a very different footing. Even the McCarthys grew friendly, and nothing pleased Young Tim better than to yarn away about the little priest's doings. He told me of the Waking of McClure, of the great Orange fight, and of many other matters, in all of which Father Munro was the hero.

'Faith, he's a man!' Young Tim would say at last, in a way that made me think he placed that same man above most of the saints.

One thing, however, Father Munro could not do with either Young Tim or Ould Tim. He could not stop their whisky-drinking. Ould Tim would keep off it for a Saturday, maybe even two, but rarely three. The longer he was sober, the longer and fiercer would be the bout that followed, and the worse for poor old Kathleen. As for Young Tim, he drank much less, but a much smaller quantity put him in the fighting mood. He never struck his wife, and he tried to avoid Ould Tim; but when they met, both in their cups, then and there was a battle royal.

Thus things were, when one summer Saturday evening, a year after my first meeting with Father Munro, I passed into the court as Ould Tim came staggering out. At the foot of his stair were some angry women, who, after he had reeled by, screamed their abuse at him. Up stairs I could hear Kathleen moaning, and I was told that the beating had been much worse than usual, so bad that, just before Ould Tim had left her, one neighbour had gone off for Young Tim and another for Father Munro.

I ran up the stair, and found the woman badly bruised, but nothing more, and then, on

my way to the infirmary, saw Young Tim hurrying away toward the wynd, stick in hand. A little farther on I met the woman who had gone for Father Munro. 'His riverence was out,' she said, 'and wouldn't be in for an hour, when he'd be told,' and I passed on, to forget all about the matter a few minutes later, in the work of what is known as in-taking, which is as follows:

Each medical and each surgical ward has its in-taking day and night, during which it receives, if possible, all cases admitted for treatment. On a Saturday night, therefore, there will be a resident surgeon on duty to examine and treat all surgical cases, deciding which shall be admitted, and which must be treated as out-patients. This was receiving-night for the surgical ward in which I clerked; and being a Saturday, was fairly busy.

A battered drunkard or two came in, of course, and battered victims of the same. A child also who had been run over, and a girl from the country, at whom the ever-flourishing fool had pointed the ever-handy loaded gun, though, fortunately, without the usual fatal result. We had seen to the girl, and packed her off to bed; and Macintosh, the resident, was relieving his mind, and amusing us, by telling the fool what he thought of him, what might happen, and what might be the consequences to him, the fool, when another cab rolled to the door. A lively young dresser, who sat on the table swinging his legs, jumped down and ran out to see what was coming, but came back at once.

'A reverend gentleman on the spree!' he announced; and presently in came Father Munro.

His shovel hat was crushed down over his eyes, his coat collar was turned up to meet it, his face—as much of it as could be seen when he came in—was chalky-white, and the face of Young Tim, on whose arm he leant heavily, was not much better.

I stepped forward at once, speaking to him by name as I did so, and 'The Little General' greeted me with a dazed smile.

'Old bones, Mr Tregenna, and old eyes! I've had a tumble at last, you see, and Tim McCarthy insisted on bringing me here.'

'Quite right, sir,' I said. 'Here's the doctor ready for you,' and I introduced Macintosh, being very careful to let that gentleman know the sort of man he had for a patient.

I might have spared myself the trouble. Father Munro was his own recommendation, and in two minutes was sitting bolt upright—he refused to lie on the table—having two very ugly head wounds examined, and being treated with as much respect as any pope could desire. There were two straight, clean cuts, side by side, across the top of the head, and on one side was another, and the resident stood looking at them curiously before he asked any questions.

'How did you say this was done, sir?' he asked.

'I was going up a dark stair,' Father Munro told him quietly, 'and I had a fall.'

'Did your head strike against anything?'

'I expect I struck it in falling,' said Father

Munro; and then, a little more slowly and distinctly, 'it was a mistake made in the dark.'

I might be wrong, but it seemed to me that he meant every one in the place to hear that, and standing by the resident, I looked still more carefully at the head. Two clean-cut, parallel wounds on the top, and one at the side. Where before had I seen such another head? I could not remember, but stood racking my brain with no result.

'Now then, Tregenna! Look alive, man!'

Macintosh roused me from my meditation with a nudge, and I gave him the help that he wanted, wondering all the time.

'Were you alone, sir?'

Macintosh asked this while he pushed the examination further. He seemed puzzled too.

'I was going up the stair alone,' Father Munro said patiently.

'You must have struck your head twice, then?'

'I cannot remember all. I was rather stunned, I think.'

'Rather!' Macintosh muttered to himself, and then seemed to remember Young Tim, who was still standing and watching us anxiously from the far end of the room.

'Were you there at the time?'

Macintosh asked Young Tim the question, but it was Father Munro who answered.

'McCarthy found me at the foot of the stair,' and Young Tim said nothing.

Macintosh evidently thought that the less his patient talked the better, and he asked no more questions just then.

We got Father Munro to bed, shaved off the thick gray hair, dressed the great scalp wounds, and put an ice cap on the grand old head, and for a time all went well. Before we had finished, I remembered where I had seen other such wounds, but I held my peace and waited.

There was no side-room bed empty, and he was put into the ward for the night.

'In the morning, sir,' said Macintosh, surveying him in a critical way, with his tasselled cap on one side, after all was done, 'we'll get you a quieter crib.'

The old man lay and smiled quietly at him.

'I shall do very well here, doctor, thank you.'

'Hope so, sir,' Macintosh said, and capped as he wished him good-night, which was unprecedented, and made even our never-to-be-surprised staff open her eyes widely for a second.

When the morning came it was not thought necessary to move him after all.

Craig, the street preacher, was lying in the next bed when we brought Father Munro in, and knowing him by sight, was at first strongly antagonistic. I heard the words 'papist' and 'scarlet woman' muttered wrathfully, while we were getting our charge into bed, and we gave a hint both to Craig and to the night nurse before we left.

The next morning, however, things were very different. Craig, who was my case, beckoned me to his bed directly I went into the ward; he held a finger to his lips, and pointed that Father Munro was dozing.

'Yer boots are fair thunderous,' he whispered reproachfully. 'Can't you see the man's asleep?' I took the rebuke calmly, but couldn't resist a dig at him.

'I'm glad you leave him quiet,' I said. 'I thought you'd be at him if you got a chance.' 'There's a time for a' things,' said Craig philosophically. 'I've kep' an ee on him, an' he's a guid heart, though sair misled. We'll hae a bit crack later, maybe, and the doctor needna' be feared. I'll keep the ward quiet.'

Twice a day Young Tim came for our bulletin, wild-eyed and anxious, and twice I sent him away comforted. Father Munro lay placid and patient, worshipped by the nurses, and respected by all.

For three days we hoped, and then a change came. He grew restless, turning from side to side, and murmuring to himself. As I stood watching him from Craig's bedside that night he spoke aloud:

'A wife and bairn,' he said, 'a wife and bairn;' and was silent again.

I was reading the chart that hung at his bed-head when the chief and the resident came in together and looked at him, at which he turned over a little, and looked up into the chief's face with a smile, not quite so bright as usual.

'What's this you want, sir?' asked the chief at last. 'One of your parishioners in to see you?' And Father Munro's smile grew brighter. 'Tut, tut!' the chief went on testily, 'you're off duty, man! Some one else is seeing to your work.' But Father Munro laid an entreating hand upon his sleeve, and beckoning him to stoop, whispered in his ear.

'Can't be done,' the chief snapped at him when he finished. 'I'm responsible for you, you know.'

'And I for him?' pleaded Father Munro.

The chief frowned down with the frown that awed so many students before they knew him.

'Man, it's fair ridiculous!' he said; 'quite unprecedented. I certify that you're not fit for any duty.' But Father Munro pleaded on.

When he finished, Macintosh, standing with the chart in his hand, held it out for the chief, who, with a snort of impatience, took it, and stepped away toward me. Then he laid a finger on the upward line that marked a rising body-temperature, and turned to Macintosh again.

'Partly this notion of his, I think, sir,' Macintosh said softly. 'He's worrying over it tremendously, or I shouldn't have troubled you. He slept very little last night, you know.'

'What on earth does he want to confess a man for?' asked the chief impatiently; but that was beyond Macintosh, and he shook his head.

'If things go on like this,' said the chief, with his finger on the chart, 'I shall operate to-morrow morning.'

'What do you think of letting him have his way in this?' asked Macintosh; but the chief was quite indignant, and they went down the shadowy ward—it was growing very late—with their heads together, talking softly, while Father Munro lay and watched, peering anxiously after them all the time.

What Macintosh said further I do not know, but they came back to the bed. What Father Munro said further I don't know either, but at last the chief called me, and at once began to relieve his mind.

'What are you doing here at this time of night, Mr Tregenna?'

'Taking a case, sir.'

'You've no right to be here, none at all. There's no discipline here. We can't have this sort of thing, Dr Macintosh! There! there!' (as Macintosh tried to speak) 'that will do! It must be seen to.' Then he turned and bent over Father Munro again.

'You'll be satisfied if you see this man to-night?' And Father Munro smiled on him. 'Ten minutes are all you want, and you promise to sleep after?'

'I shall sleep,' he promised; and then I got my instructions.

I was to fetch Young Tim to Father Munro's bedside, and I was to leave him there ten minutes. I was to warn him first as to his behaviour, and I was to take him away when time was up. Then we all three left the ward. Macintosh to get a little sleep, for he was to come round again later, the chief to go home, and I to do my errand.

I found Young Tim sitting in his one room, at the top of a seven-storeyed house, staring out at a cloudless sky, in which stars were beginning to show. His wife and the baby were sound asleep, but Tim looked as though he had never known what sleep meant. He heard my errand in silence, and in silence he walked by me until—in the darkened ward, where only here and there a glimmer of gas was shown, and where the only other moving thing was the ghost-like shape of the night-nurse—we stood by Father Munro.

'Ten minutes, my son,' was all that the priest said to me; and then, drawing away to a window seat, watch in hand, I left them. Screens fenced the corner in which the bed lay, the last on that side of the ward. I could not see, I could not hear, what was going on. Once or twice I heard a stifled sob, hushed at once by the voice of the Little General. The minutes dragged like hours. The night-nurse, moving like a shadow here and there down the glimmering length of the place, the silent forms dimly outlined in the nearer beds, were no company to me. Once I raised my watch until I could see the second hand moving, and hear the sound.

I gave them the ten minutes and a few seconds over. Then I went and tapped at the screen. The voices had stopped, and when I went round at the Little General's word, he lay and smiled peacefully at me, his hand laid upon Young Tim's head, while Tim's face was buried in the bed-clothes.

'Tim and I have settled our affairs,' said the Little General, 'and you are a witness to it, my son, if ever witness is needed.'

'Tell him, father!' Tim begged.

'Would ye doubt my authority, Tim McCarthy? I've confessed you, and absolved you, with a penance and a promise. Fare ye well!'

The thin fingers were extended in benediction, and then Tim, the tears streaming down

his face, crept away into the darkness, and I knelt in his place.

'Can I do anything for you, sir?'

His hand trembled in the air once more, whether for me or for the vanished man I do not know.

'An innocent wife and a bairn!' said Father Munro, 'Nunc dimittis,' and turning his face to the wall slowly, slipped into dreams from which he never rallied.

The Little General was carried to his grave with more pomp than ever he had encouraged while alive; and many masses were said for his soul before I met Young Tim again, 'Though the use av masses to a holy saint in Paradise,' as Bridget McClosky said to me, 'is unbeknown.'

I had thought of Young Tim often, having an uneasy doubt concerning him, and passing up the Grassmarket one night, had him in my mind again, when he stood before me.

'Think of the devil!' I misquoted, and then stopped, for there was light enough to see the words didn't apply.

It was a Saturday night, but Young Tim was sober though excited, and when he asked me for a moment's chat, I invited him to my room. We passed up in silence, I wondering a great deal, but determined to ask no questions. I pointed to a chair, and looked dubiously at my shelves. Hospitality suggested an offer of whisky and a fill of 'laccy,' but I restrained my instincts and faced him in silence.

'I was thinkin', docthor,' he said at last, 'that as you were friends with the holy father'—and he stopped again.

'What holy father?' I asked. 'I know none.'

'There's but wan for me,' said Tim, and then stopped again.

'If you mean poor Father Munro,' I answered, 'what of him?'

'He laid a penance on me,' Young Tim said softly, 'an' I'm doin' it, an' will till I die. He giv' me absolution too, an' I giv' him a promise.'

'Keep it then!' I said sourly, but Tim went on.

'There's no justice in it. The holy father was always just.'

'Shame,' I said. 'Would you break your promise to a dead man?'

'Sure an' I will if need be,' said Tim fervently. 'You were there, an' what I must know, had he his sines?'

'As much as you or I,' I said angrily, 'if not more. You can't get out of it that way.'

Tim rose from his chair and faced me, frowning.

'Ye don't know,' he cried; 'I've all to lose if I break me promise. But, if I made it to a senseless saint who couldn't judge me or me sin, I'll break me promise, and be judged by a harder man.'

I sat and puzzled it out, while the voices of the children came up from the reeking court, and Tim leant against the mantel-piece, breathing hard, but watching me steadily.

'He was a better and wiser man than either of us,' I said at last. 'The secret lies between you and him, and you must keep it;' and Tim,

sober and hard-working, holds to his promise still.

As for me, I remember that the only time I saw such wounds as Father Munro had was when, in an election riot, a constable felled a rioter who afterwards came under my hands. His staff made two parallel wounds like knife-cuts, and the other wound was caused by the fall. It was night, and the stair a dark one, where the Little General came by his death-blow. If Young Tim, who had often threatened, was waiting there for Ould Tim when Father Munro toiled up, the rest is easily understood. But I have asked no questions, and do not intend to. If Young Tim has ever to give an account of that night's doings, I fancy, somehow, that the Little General will be there to plead for him.

THEN AND NOW.

THEN the merle and thrush were singing round the homesteads in the hedges

Where the fragrant hawthorn blossoms lay where wintry snows had been,

Then the gorsy fires were blazing, and the marsh lamps lit the sedges,

Then the meadow lands were smiling in their robes of gold and green.

Then your eyes were bluer, brighter than the violets in the valleys,

And your sweet voice filled with envy skylarks soaring out of sight,

And the pale, pink apple blossoms in the orchard's grassy alleys

By your blushing cheeks grew truly in a moment wan and white.

Now the birds are silent, feasting where the scarlet berries cluster;

Where the beech and oak are flaming, love-lorn cushats sadly call;

Dreaming of the tropic splendours, swallows on the house-tops muster,

And within the ancient orchard, red-cheeked apple earthward fall.

Now your eyes have lost their radiance, and your voice has lost its sweetness,

Now we've lads and lasses round us, blithe and bonny, good and dear;

Spring and summer have departed with amazing speed and fleetness,

Now, dear wife, it is the autumn of our lives, and of the year.

In the spring I wooed and won you, in the spring our troths were plighted,

When our hearts were brave and buoyant, and our love untried and new;

Now in autumn through all sorrows, joys, and hopes fulfilled and blighted,

Hand in hand we stand together bound by love still fresh and true.

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